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Today at 10:28 AM

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Note: Thanks to @ToonTownRob for posting this mini-revelation about the power of starting your email responses with a twist. It inspired this week's Motivation!

Listing sites like Airbnb and Vrbo rank as the top pound-for-pound allocation of your time to generate inquiries. All the various listing sites make up Stage 1 of work. But also from our findings, we learned that not all listings are created equally. Like speed-dating, if you don't convey quickly what makes you different from every other listing, you've lost the goldfish-level attention span of the visitor.

Note: As @Kim likes to remind us, according to some research, the average human attention span is now eight seconds, less than that of the goldfish with nine

Below are 8 deep adjustments that are reverse engineered from the factors that lead a visitor to inquire or book: intrigue, engagement, and confidence.

1) Explain you do this for a living

The vast majority of Airbnb hosts do not view their listing as a job, which while endearing and whimsical can also sew doubt in prospective guests. So come out with a disclaimer at the beginning of your listing, revealing you run your property like a business.

2) Add provenance

The word provenance refers to the chronology of an antique or piece or art. The backstory of that object is what makes it valuable. So sprinkle provenance throughout your listing; what's the story on the property, how did you come to represent it, why is the destination special to you and your family?

3) Sprinkle property name liberally

"The billboard effect" is a phenomenon that occurs when vacation rental professionals see additional direct bookings after listing on Airbnb. But you need a unique property name (or business name) to pull this off. Insert your unique property name in the title and several times throughout the description, photo captions, and

4) Improve & shorten origin story

How did you find yourself in this position as a host? DO NOT leave your aspirational storyline on the table. The more interesting or relatable your "pre vacation rental" About Us section, the more you'll attract inquiries who respect and admire your business. Brevity beats details in this department: you should be able to explain your "origin" story in a few sentences.

5) Get on the eco train

Environmentally-friendly vacation rentals are exponentially more appealing than their direct counterparts. Which aspects of your business (products, services, amenities) reflect your awareness of the environment? Mention them blatantly

6) Associate with a special interest niche

Listing sites like Airbnb are like a giant supermarket and it can be overwhelming for guests to navigate to the right specialty aisle, much less find your particular product without some solid signage. Make sure to mention the exact kinds of travelers who most enjoy your property with any buzzwords necessary (yes, this is the one time we permit the use of buzzwords #blessed).

7) Deploy "underdog narrative"

Hollywood movie writers use the underdog narrative to get potential viewers to admire the character for trying, moreso than for their actual success. Do this with your listing by including a short anecdote about a challenge, failure, or humble achievement that triggers emotion -- turning what was previously a transaction into a human experience.

8) Skimmify your text (3 parts)

Remember the goldfish stat? Listing viewers have very short attention spans and the more skimmable your layout, the better. Here are three quick ways to do that.

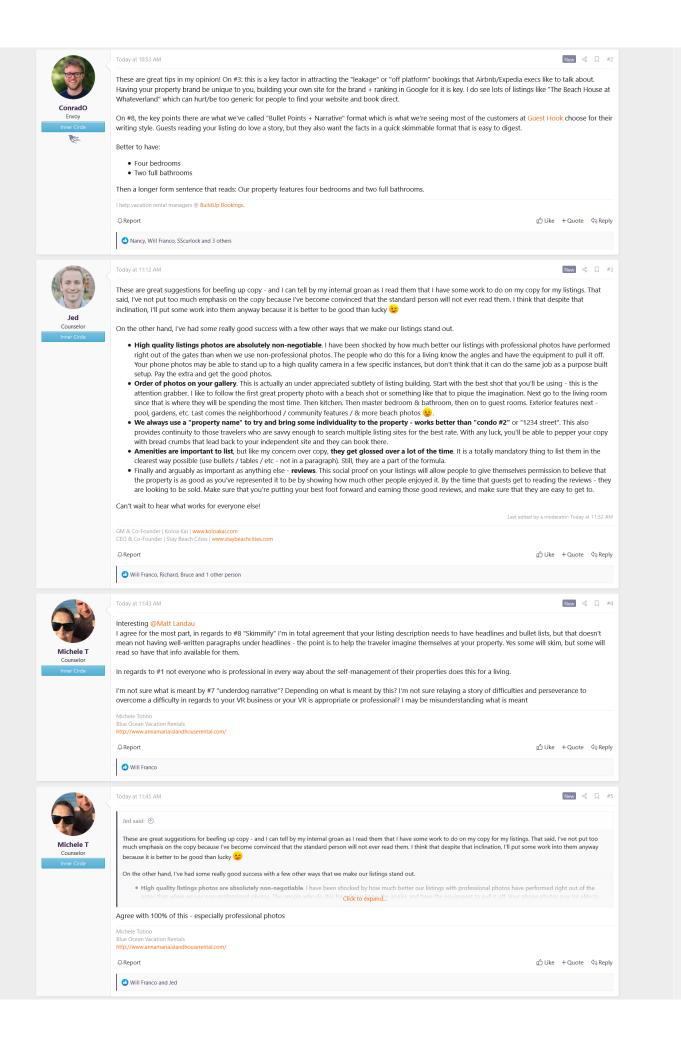
- 8.1 Normal paragraphs feel like massive walls to someone not fully vested just yet (aka. Visitors simply do not read them) so reduce your paragraph length
- down to 1-2 sentences (3 max) deleting as much fluff as possible. Your paragraphs should include everything they need, nothing they don't

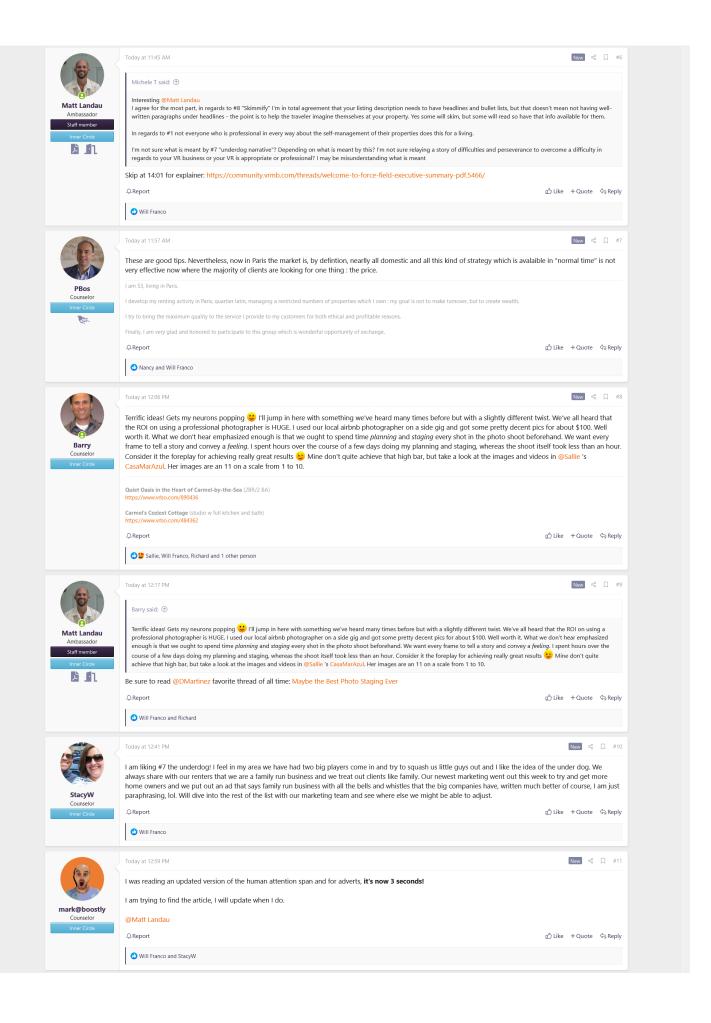
 8.2 Use headers (or short summaries of content) to break up sections. Headers are best when ordered to give the hierarchy of the listing.
- 8.3 CAPITALIZE money words that pique people's interest, make them use their imagination and turn the ordinary into something worth paying money for. Use ALL CAPS sparingly.
- 8.4 Use bullets or lists to show features, benefits, or any cluster of items together one per line.

Question for Members: What other ideas have you done (consciously or by accident) to beef up your listings?

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Will Franco and SScurlock







Today at 1:02 PM

No listing site is the same, which is 100% correct

It's hard to have a one shoe fits all approach when looking at all of them

For example, Airbnb you can get super creative with copy

However the USP is what I am going to add in

U-Unique

S-Selling

P-Photo

The first photo is the main one. It's your best one

It's the thumb stopper

The area leading stopp

The scroll stopper

And also, when you set it, don't forget it.

A photo you use in the Spring will be different you use for Summer bookings

OR for those Hyyge winter bookings

Thanks for the tag @Matt Landau

And just to clarify your point, my attention to spam and addiction to all things online now meant it was very hard for me to read that whole post and the comments.

Lam 100% a video and audio guy

Which is madness, seeing that I'm writing my first book this year 😉

△Report

△ Like +Quote 〜 Reply

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Sallie Envoy Inner Circle 57 minutes ago

The best sales letter ever written sold \$2 billion worth of subscriptions to *The Wall Street Journal* between 1975-2003.

This classic "The Tale of Two Young Men" begins with:

On a beautiful late spring afternoon, twenty-five years ago, two young men graduated from the same college. They were very much alike, these two young men. Both had been better than average students, both were personable and both – as young college graduates are – were filled with ambitious dreams for the future.

Recently, these two men returned to college for their 25th reunion.

They were still very much alike. Both were happily married. Both had three children. And both, it turned out, had gone to work for the same Midwestern manufacturing company after graduation, and were still there.

But there was a difference. One of the men was manager of a small department of that company. The other was its president.

What Made The Difference

Have you ever wondered, as I have, what makes this kind of difference in people's lives? It isn't always a native intelligence or talent or dedication. It isn't that one person wants success and the other doesn't.

The difference lies in what each person knows and how he or she makes use of that knowledge.

And that is why I am writing to you and to people like you about The Wall Street Journal. For that is the whole purpose of The Journal: To give its readers knowledge - knowledge that they can use in business...

What are the takeaways for us?

1. Know who your ideal guest is. What do they yearn for?

Remember Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" pyramid, with five levels ascending from physical needs to self-actualization?

Unless you're hosting disaster victims or Hospice patients, we can skip over the pyramid's two bottom levels covering the basic needs of water, food, clothing, shelter; financial security, health, and physical safety.

The third level up is "Love and Belonging"—friendship, romantic love, family, social groups, community acceptance. How does your property and hosting help fulfill one or more of these needs?

The fourth level is "Esteem," and this is where we shine as hosts. People crave to feel valued and appreciated (without pandering).

Like in the film Avatar, we ache to have someone demonstrate "I see you."

Your photos and captions can communicate this (people look at photos before they read body copy).

For example, our Mexican beach location and property are for adults craving rest, relaxation and reconnection, along with the sense of living in their own private resort. A photo of a woman getting a massage on the ocean-view terrace is captioned with "Pampering services come to you."

Once your guests arrive, their finding small touches and amenities can continue conveying your message "I see you." You're already doing these things: a personalized Welcome note, a dog toy if you welcome doggies, a nightlight in the bathroom, a couple of suggestions for where to eat dinner their first evening, even clearing up "What time is it here?" when guests arrive from different time zones.

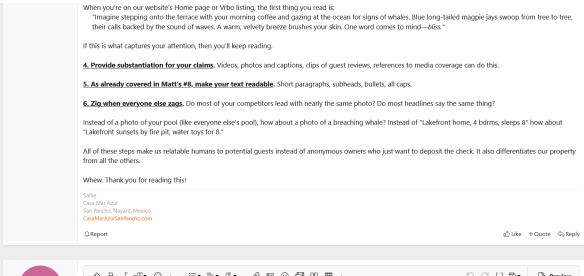
Maslow's final level is "Self Actualization," when we've reached our full potential. While this is an aspiration few achieve, can we offer any experiences that could help our guests find a meaning to life that could transform them a bit? Experiences with nature, or interacting with people very different from themselves, can open this door.

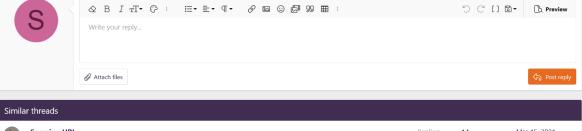
2. Write like you're talking to a friend. What do you want your friend to anticipate experiencing? What do you want him to feel jazzed about? What do you want her to visualize?

Would you say to her, "Our unit is steps from the ocean" or would you say, "Wrap a sarong around your bathing suit, pad across the lawn, and in less than a minute you're scrunching sand between your toes and looking at the sparkling turquoise sea."

3. Copywriters learn to make an emotional connection before attempting to convey information. Yes, prospective guests need to know how many people you can accommodate and what's included. But that won't stand out against your competitors.

How will they feel when they live in your property? What will they experience? What emotions can you evoke?





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